

Also, the melanics usually occur, alongside normal forms, whereas, from information available to date, it appears that the form of *S. albostriatus* found seems to depend on the locality, as I have no records of both forms occurring together. Also, I have not examined any specimens which appear intermediate between the two forms.

Having stated the case for the existence of a variety, I should like to suggest the name:

Syrphus albostriatus Fallén var. *nigrum*.

I would naturally be more than pleased to hear from any person who has any comments or observations to make on this matter.

I am indebted to Mr C. Searle for allowing me to examine specimens of *S. albostriatus* in his collection.

Reference

Coe. R. L. Royal Entomological Society Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects. Vol. X. Part I. (London 1953).

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Notes and Observations

PLUSIA GAMMA L. AND *NOMOPHILA NOCTUELLA* SCHIFF. IN SOUTH DEVON.—Totals recorded in my mercury vapour light trap during the period 12th May to 15th September 1971 are as under, the 1970 figures being shown in brackets:

Plusia gamma L. The May total was 11 (17); June 23 (33); July 47 (121); August 1451 (473) with peaks of 43 on 8th, 91 on 12th, 105 on 16th, 86 on 17th, 181 on 19th, 295 on 20th, 101 on 21st, 103 on 24th and 115 on 26th September, for 15 nights, showed a total of say 1500 (23) with peaks of 60 on 5th, 76 on 6th, 80 on 9th, 187 on 11th, 105 on 12th, 61 on 13th, 73 on 14th and 205 on 15th.

Nomophila noctuella Schiff. May 0 (2), June 0 (18), July 4 (114), August 111 (311) with peaks of 10 on 17th, 15 on 19th, 10 on 20th, 8 on 24th, 9 on 25th and 10 on 27th. The September total for 15 nights was 13 (97).—H. L. O'HEFFERNAN, c/o 12 Firth Road, Rondebosch, C.P., South Africa. 16.ix.1971.

CURIOUS BEHAVIOUR OF LARVA OF *ACHERONTIA ATROPOS* L.—To these notes some years ago I detailed unusual behaviour of the brown coloured form of the larva. In Cape Town last February I captured one evening a brown larva, feeding on *Tecomaria eupensis*. It was parasitized by a Tachinid fly.

It fed all night after capture and was still eating at 8.30 a.m. next day. By 1 p.m. it was completely buried in the earth provided. It emerged again at 7.45 p.m. and was eating within ten minutes: large quantities of the food plant were consumed during the night and at 9.45 a.m. next day it was still resting

head downwards on the foodplant, but by 1 p.m. it was again completely buried in the earth. It emerged at 7.30 p.m. and commenced eating immediately, continuing to do so all night. It buried itself next day at 8.45 a.m. and emerged again at 8.10 p.m. It rested all night, taking no food, and buried itself for the last time at 9.15 a.m. and pupated, but, of course, only the Tachinid flies emerged.—H. L. O'HEFFERNAN. 29.viii.1971.

LARVAE OF *PHAULERNIS DENTELLA* ZELLER (LEP.: TINEINA) IN SUFFOLK.—On 31st July, I collected some seedheads of *Chaerophyllum temulum* into a bag at Thorpeness, at the spot where Col. Emmet had taken the moth of *Phaulernis dentella* Zeller in 1966 (cf. Wakely, *Ent. Rec.*, **79**: 3). On looking into the bag a few days later, I saw with much pleasure that it contained many *dentella* larvae which were feeding on the seeds; also, two late larvae of *Depressaria chaerophylli* Zeller, from which the moths have since materialised.—J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT, 6.x.1971.

NEPTICULA DECENTELLA H.-S. (LEP.: TINEINA) IN KENT.—I took a single specimen of a rather strikingly marked 'Nep' here in my m.v. trap on 11th July, which Col. Emmet kindly determined as *Nepticula decentella* H.-S. and a species apparently hard to come by. For a figure of the moth and an account of its discovery in Britain (in 1931) cf. Adkin, *Entomologist*, **66**: 25-27, plt. 1, fig. 1.—J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT, 6.x.1971.

NOTES ON SOME BRECONSHIRE LEPIDOPTERA.—At Trebanog near Hirwaun, close to the Glamorganshire border, is a lush marshy field where the Globe Flower (*Trollius europaeus* L.) and other local plants flourish. On 23rd June, a warm sunny day, both sexes of *Euphydryas aurinia* Rott. were flying there, and numerous specimens of the pretty *Eustrotia uncula* Clerck rose at my feet. Also noted, were single examples of *Orthonama lignata* Hübn. = *vittata* Borkh., *Stenoptilia bipuncta-dactyla* Scop. and *Catoptria margaritella* D. & S., of which the latter is new to Breconshire. The previous day, on the high ground above Ystradfellte, Dr. Neil Horton and I visited some boggy ground sloping down to the river Llia, where amongst other species, we saw *Argynnis selene* D. & S. and *Epirrhoe tristata* L. and a single ♂ *Lampropteryx otregiata* Metcalf which he captured flying in the sun. Nearby, on the moors, I took a larva on grass (awaiting determination), which spun a neat white cocoon in the leaf fold, and produced a specimen of *Ochsenheimeria birdella* Curtis on 14th July. Both *L. otregiata* and *O. birdella* are new to Breconshire.—J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT, 1 Hardcourts Close, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 95G. 6.x.1971.